

§ 143B-216.33. Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing – creation, powers and duties.

(a) There is hereby created within the Department of Health and Human Services, the Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing. The Division shall have the powers and duties including the following:

- (1) To review existing programs for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in the State, and make recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and to the Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction for improvements to such programs;
- (2) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-237, s. 11.4(b).
- (3) To provide a network of resource centers for local access to services such as interpreters, information and referral, telephone relay, and advocacy for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- (4) To collect, study, maintain, publish and disseminate information relative to all aspects of deafness;
- (5) To promote public awareness of the needs of, resources and opportunities available to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- (6) To provide technical assistance to agencies and organizations in the development of services to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- (7) To administer the Telecommunications Program for the Deaf pursuant to G.S. 143B-216.34; and
- (8) To provide training and skill development programming to enhance the competence of individuals who aspire to be licensed or who are currently licensed as interpreters or transliterators under Chapter 90D of the General Statutes.

(b) The Division shall function under the authority of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services as provided in the Executive Organization Act of 1973 and shall perform such other duties as are assigned by the Secretary.

(c) The Department of Health and Human Services may receive monies from any source, including federal funds, gifts, grants and devises which shall be expended for the purposes designated in this Part. Gifts and devises received shall be deposited in a trust fund with the State Treasurer who shall hold them in trust in a separate account in the name of the Division. The cash balance of this account may be pooled for investment purposes, but investment earnings shall be credited pro rata to this participating account. Monies deposited with the State Treasurer in the trust fund account pursuant to this subsection, and investment earnings thereon, are available for expenditure without further authorization from the General Assembly. Such funds shall be administered by the Division under the direction of the director and fiscal officer of the Division and will be subject to audits normally conducted with the agency.

(d) The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services shall adopt rules to implement this Part. (1989, c. 533, s. 2; 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 1999-237, s. 11.4(b); 2002-182, s. 5; 2003-56, s. 3; 2011-284, s. 100.)